

Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 SR-02

ORM-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /067 W

----- 069249

O 240250Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4004

INFO SECDEF WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MANILA NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SEOUL NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO NIACT IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC HONOLULU NIACT IMMEDIATE

USMISSION GENEVA NIACT IMMEDIATE

USUN NEW YORK NIACT IMMEDIATE 822

AMCONSUL DANANG NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 3340

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR EAID PORG EWWT SREF ICRC JA KS TW RP VS

SUBJECT: GVN REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN MOVING REFUGEES FROM MR-1

REF: SAIGON 3316 (NOTAL)

1. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PHAN QUANG DAN (CONCURRENTLY MINISTER OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND RESPONSIBLE FOR REFUGEE MATTERS) MET MARCH 23 WITH AMBASSADORS OF ROC AND ROK, MYSELF PLUS STAFF, LOCAL REPS OF ICRC (WEBER) AND LICROSS (SEVERI), AND VIETNAMESE RED CROSS OFFICIALS.

2. DAN DECLARED NUMBER ONE REFUGEE PRIORITY AT THIS TIME IS CONCENTRATION OF 500 THOUSAND REFUGEES IN DANANG IN MR-1 WHERE THEY CANNOT BE CARED FOR. GVN DESIRES TO MOVE THEM TO KHANH HOA, BINH THUAN AND NINH THUAN PROVINCES IN MR-2 WHERE ADEQUATE
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FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE AND SUPPLY IS EASIER. DAN SAID GVN SEA

TRANSPORT CAPACITY WOULD PERMIT MOVING ONLY 60,000 PERSONS A MONTH, AND APPEALED FOR ASSISTANCE.

3. HE REPORTED HE HAD MET EARLIER WITH PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR TO MAKE SIMILAR REQUEST, AND PHILIPPINES WOULD MAKE AVAILABLE ONE LST ALREADY IN DANANG AND PERHAPS OTHERS FROM THE PHILIPPINES. (REFTEL REPORTED SIMILAR APPROACH TO JAPANESE CHARGE.)

4. BASED ON MISSION STAFF WORK PRIOR TO THE MEETING I INFORMED DR. DAN THAT SUBJECT TO GVN ABILITY TO MAKE ADEQUATE ARRANGEMENTS AT POINT OF DEPARTURE IN DANANG AND FOR RECEPTION AT CAM RANH WE COULD PROBABLY BEGIN WITHIN TWO OR THREE DAYS TO PROVIDE A 747 AIRCRAFT (FLYING TIGERS) TO BEGIN AIRLIFT OF REFUGEES TO CAM RANH BAY. THIS WILL BE CARGO AIRCRAFT AND WILL BE ABLE TO CARRY AS MANY AS 1,500 PASSENGERS PER FLIGHT. WE ARE PLANNING ON FIVE FLIGHTS DAILY. A US MISSION/GVN TEAM IS ON THE WAY THIS MORNING TO CAM RANH TO RESOLVE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS. WE MADE CLEAR THAT FUNDS AT THE TIME WERE AVAILABLE FOR ABOUT ONE WEEK'S OPERATION.

5. WE ALSO DISCUSSED POSSIBILITY USING DC-8'S DESTINED FOR PHNOM PENH BUT ONLY IF POCHENTONG CLOSED. WITH CAPACITY OF 600 PERSONS EACH, FIVE DC-8'S COULD MOVE 9,000 PERSONS A DAY OR MORE DEPENDING ON VARIOUS FACTORS.

6. IT WAS AGREED DPM DAN WOULD NEED TWO DAYS TO MAKE PREPARATIONS ON GROUND BEFORE EITHER 747 OR DC-8 AIRLIFT OR A COMBINATION COULD BEGIN. DC-8' COULD LAND AT NHA TRANG, CAM RANH OR PHAN RANG, BUT 747'S ONLY AT CAM RANH.

7. I FURTHER UNDERTOOK TO LOOK INTO POSSIBILITY OF CHARTERING TWO COMMERCIAL LST'S, WHICH COULD CARRY ABOUT ONE THOUSAND PERSONS. LST'S WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR AT LEAST SEVERAL DAYS.

8. CHINESE AND KOREAN AMBASSADORS WERE POSITIVE BUT CAUTIOUS IN THEIR RESPONSES, INDICATING THEY WOULD PASS ON REQUEST FOR SEA AND AIRLIFT CAPABILITY TO THEIR GOVERNMENTS BUT THEY WOULD NOT EXPECT ANY RESPONSE FOR ABOUT A WEEK. DR. DAN NOTED THAT MOVEMENT WOULD PROBABLY CONTINUE FOR FOUR TO SIX WEEKS SO ROC AND ROK ASSISTANCE WOULD STILL BE USEFUL EVEN IF IT DID NOT BEGIN IMMEDIATELY.

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9. ICRC AND LICROSS REPS INDICATED DECISION ON USE OF ICRC OR IOG FUNDS TO CHARTER SHIPS OR PLANES WOULD TAKE ABOUT TWO WEEKS. WHILE THEY PROMISED TO FORWARD REQUEST I AM NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT SIGNIFICANT FUNDS BEING MADE AVAILABLE FROM THAT SOURCE. (THEY ARE, OF COURSE, ACTIVE IN FOOD AND OTHER TYPES OF AID.)

10. THE STEPS OUTLINED ABOVE ARE ONLY A BEGINNING TO MEET AN URGENT IMMEDIATE NEED AND TO TRY TO KEEP THE REFUGEE PROBLEM IN

THEDANANG AREA WITHIN MANAGEABLE PROPORTIONS. THE FOLLOWING
ADDITIONAL ACTIONS SHOULD BE URGENTLY CONSIDERED:

(A) DISPATCH OF US NAVY ASSETS SUCH AS LSTS AVAILABLE
NEARBY IN WESTPAC TO ASSIST IN SEA LIFT OF REFUGEES FROM DANANG
TO PORTS IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE COUNTRY;
(B) DEMARCHES IN TOKYO, TAIPEI, SEOUL AND MANILA TO SUPPORT
APPEAL MADE BY GVN TO THOSE GOVERNMENTS;
(C) FOLLOW UP BY USDEL GENEVA WITH LEAGUE OF RED CROSS
AND ICRC TO URGE RAPID RESPONSE TO VIETNAMESE RED CROSS APPEAL
TO LEAGUE AND URGE MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY FOR IOG FUNDS APPROVED FOR
VIETNAM TO ENABLE GVN TO CHARTER ADDITIONAL AIR OR SEA LIFT.
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